

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 004285

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AO

SUBJECT: CUBAN FLIGHTS TO ANGOLA

REF: LISBON 10

1. WE WOULD APPRECIATE FURTHER REPORT ON PORTUGUESE ACTIONS AGAINST AZORES TRANSIT OF CUBAN AIRCRAFT EN ROUTE TO AFRICA. IN PARTICULAR, WE SHOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHAT "MEASURES" MELO-ANTUNES MAY HAVE TAKEN IN THIS REGARD.

2. GIVEN THE SYMPATHIES FOR MPLA RECOGNITION SHOWN BY FOREIGN MINISTER AT TIME OF PORTUGUESE WITHDRAWAL FROM ANGOLA, WE BELIEVE IT MIGHT BE PROFITABLE TO PUT THE AZORES TRANSIT PROBLEM INTO A BROADER AND MORE FAVORABLE FRAMEWORK. THEREFORE, IF YOU NOW BELIEVE IT NECESSARY TO GO TO THE PRIME MINISTER OR TO GO OUTSIDE REGULAR CHANNELS TO AIR FORCE OR POLITICAL PARTIES, YOU HAVE FULL AUTHORITY TO DO SO. IN LATTER CONNECTION, WE NOTE SOARES'S COMMENTS ON THIS SUBJECT IN CARACAS (CARACAS 83).

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3. AT JANUARY 2 PRESS BRIEFING SPOKESMAN AGREED TO LOOK INTO QUESTION ABOUT CUBAN TRANSIT OF AZORES. SINCE THEN THERE HAS BEEN NEITHER FOLLOW-UP TO THE ORIGINAL INQUIRY NOR ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS. HOWEVER, IF IT IS PURSUED, WE SHALL CONFIRM THAT MATTER HAS BEEN RAISED WITH GOP. SO LONG AS WE BELIEVE THAT GOP WILL STOP THE TRANSIT, WE SHALL CONTINUE TO SAY AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE. KISSINGER

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